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Is This Cooperation, Mr. Broadcaster?

CALIFORNIA IS ONE OF THE STATES attempting to follow the leadership of the United States Office of Education and the Federal Communications Commission by planning for a publicly-controlled, educational FM network. Reports indicate that the University of California is seeking a legislative appropriation of \$1,750,000 for this worthy purpose. It goes without saying that all persons who are sincerely interested in assisting radio to render maximum service to education will wish the progressive state of California well in this effort.

California has an excellent reputation educationally. It has a distinguished university—the largest in the world. A substantial per-capita sum is provided from state funds for the education of every student who attends the public schools. Fine school plants, the envy of many other states, have been provided. Standards for admission to the teaching profession are high. Teachers' salaries are very substantially above the average for the nation as a whole. Personnel in the state's teaching and administrative posts meet rigorous standards. Many important advances in educational practice have originated in California. No state is better qualified to embark on new educational endeavors.

It is hard to believe that any member of the commercial radio industry would have any other feelings than those of gratitude to find educators showing such a deep interest in radio and its non-commercial, educational, and public service possibilities. Especially should they welcome the entrance into the radio field of the public educational authorities. Yet *Broadcasting*, February 3 [page 61], reports that Northern and Southern California Broadcasters Associations are opposing the entrance of California into FM. The reason for this reported opposition, according to *Broadcasting*, is because broadcasters are "conscious of this threat to freedom of expression as well as implied competition."

This writer must have been fortunate in his associations with members of the commercial broadcasting fraternity. Practically all of those with whom he is acquainted would encourage, rather than impede, educational FM plans. Surely commercial broadcasting in California is not in such a precarious position as to cause any of its members to fear networks operated by the public educational authorities. [Can it be that education is a threat to business? When have educators been convicted of suppressing free speech?] Yet such opposition can lead only to the conclusion that California broadcasters are suffering from fear—have developed feelings of insecurity, of inadequacy.

Perhaps the attitude of the Northern and Southern California Broadcasters Associations has been incorrectly reported. In that case a public denial is in order, and *Broad-*

casting should provide prominent space in an effort to undo the irrevocable damage which an incorrect report of this nature might do.

In any event, it is to be hoped that the officers of the National Association of Broadcasters will take cognizance of this unfortunate move on the part of the California radio industry. An NAB investigation should result in an official statement immediately in full support of California's proposed state educational FM project. Only in that way can the NAB convince American educators of commercial radio's sincerity in its professions of friendliness.

An official investigation by the Federal Communications Commission also seems to be indicated. The Commission has labored diligently to bring about the establishment of educational FM networks by the public educational authorities in each of the forty-eight states. It has set aside twenty channels for this use at the request of Dr. John W. Studebaker, United States Commissioner of Education. Although the educational FM channels, which it is believed are ~~sum~~ sufficient to accommodate as many as seven or eight hundred stations, have not, even yet, been applied for in large numbers, the Commission realizes the almost staggering problems which the educators are facing today. It is aware that schools generally need more time to complete their plans and arrange for financing than do commercial applicants. But the Commission could have had no prior intimation that commercial broadcasters would fight the educators on the whole educational FM proposal. In fact the very opposite is the case.

The Federal Communications Commission is a trustee of the public interest insofar as broadcasting channels are concerned. It has been protecting these twenty FM channels because it believes that it is in the "public interest, convenience, and necessity" for the educational authorities in each of the states to have adequate radio facilities under their control through which accepted educational objectives may be advanced.

Is there an ulterior motive behind this commercial opposition? Could it be the hope that if states are prevented from establishing educational FM stations, the twenty channels would be thrown open to commercial exploitation? Perhaps an FCC investigation might bring to light some interesting data. It is conceivable that, if the facts warranted, a public statement of the findings might be released widely for public consumption. The least that could be done by the FCC would be to issue an official statement deplored the irresponsible attitudes which the article in *Broadcasting* reports, and to make sure that this statement received wide publicity.—TRACY F. TYLER, *Editor*.

The President's Page

An Open Letter to AER Members

9345 Lawton Avenue
Detroit 6, Michigan
March 1, 1947

DEAR FELLOW MEMBER:

This month several important matters relating to the welfare of the Association for Education by Radio will need your careful attention. These are:

Constitution

In accordance with the procedures agreed upon at our Chicago meeting in October, the AER Constitution Committee, headed by Dr. Belmont Farley, has redrafted the proposed Constitution for our organization. All written suggestions received from members as well as those made at the Chicago meeting were considered in detail by this committee. The copies of the new draft were sent to the Executive Committee for review, and were returned to the AER Constitution Committee by February 10. You will receive a copy of this revised Constitution with the April issue of the *Journal*.

The Constitution will be thoroughly reviewed at the general meeting of AER members in Columbus May 2. If you cannot attend the meeting, will you make certain that your comments reach me by April 20, so that due consideration may be given to each suggestion. No formal action will be taken at the meeting in Columbus, but as soon as possible after that meeting, a final revision will be forwarded to you and a vote on its adoption taken by mail. This careful consideration of the Constitution should insure a document that will definitely meet our objectives and provide for a well working organization.

Elections

Dr. Franklin Dunham, chief of radio, U. S. Office of Education, has agreed to act as chairman of the Election Committee this year. You will be asked to vote for the following national officers: President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer, and for the

regional presidents in the Southwestern Pacific and Southeastern areas.

The following schedule regarding elections has been approved:

Nominating ballot mailed out from the National Office at Chicago, February 10.

Nominating ballot to be returned to Election Committee, Washington, D. C., postmarked not later than March 1.

Candidates notified of their nomination.

Final ballot mailed to members, March 22.

Ballots returned to Washington, D. C., postmarked not later than April 5.

I am sure we all realize the importance of this election and I trust that you will meet the deadlines listed above, so that your choice for officers may be counted.

Canada-United States Transcription Series

Several of the contributing groups for this series have asked for an extension of time in order to insure a better production. Therefore, the deadline for all scripts in this series has been extended to March 15.

Word comes that the St. Louis group made a gala affair of the recording of their contribution to this series. Under the leadership of Dorothy Blackwell, the script was recorded before an audience of teachers in the Playhouse of Station KMOX, February 27. The meeting was in conjunction with their State Conference.

If any of you who have not been contacted would like to contribute to this series, will you please so notify us so that details may be worked out.

Seminar for AER Members

It is proposed that a seminar for AER members be held at the University of Wisconsin July 28 to August 6. Sufficient time will be given for a close examination of publicity materials, individual programs, and policies set up in each community.

Since the number to be accommodated must in some measure be restricted, will you notify Harold B. McCarty immediately if you are interested. Expenses will be at a minimum and you may rest assured that the finest authorities in the country will be on hand for consultations.

Summer Institutes

When you are planning your summer institute, will you set aside an AER DAY and send us the proposed date as soon as possible? It is hoped that representatives from the AER may be able to visit you at that time.

Utilization Procedures

We agreed at our AER meeting last October that Utilization Procedures should be sent to the Chicago School Broadcast Conference by June 1. Let us have a wide representation of entries this year. This is one way in which we can share our ideas.

Institute for Education by Radio, Columbus, Ohio

The following dates have been fixed for the AER meetings in conjunction with the Columbus Institute:

May 1—Executive Meeting [Open Meeting]—7:00-10:00 p.m.

May 2—Business Meeting [All Members]—10:00-12:00 a.m.

May 3—AER Luncheon—12:00 noon.

Details of these meetings will be given you in the April issue of the *AER Journal*, but may I suggest that you jot these dates on your calendar now. It is time also to encourage other members of your administration and friends of radio in your area to join us at this meeting. We should have representatives from every section of the country.

I trust that you will take time to weigh carefully the matters listed above and make a special effort to send me your reactions.

Sincerely,
KATHLEEN N. LARDIE

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